



March 2022

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Around the World in 48 Hours W7Y Special Event Station Makes Over 1,500 Contacts

W7Y -- the Special Event Station created to commemorate WGY's 100th anniversary -- logged 1,546 contacts during the weekend of Saturday, February 19th and Sunday, February 20th. The farthest contact was South Korea, with the farthest U.S. state reached being Hawaii. Overall, W7Y's overseas signals traveled 620,512 -- not counting the thousands of miles reached during contacts with U.S. based Amateurs.

Operation of the W7Y station began Saturday morning, with members of the Schenectady Museum Amateur Radio Association (SMARA), partnering with EGARA to work from their club station at the museum. Several of its members turned out to operate two stations, mostly on 20 and 40 meters using a combination of voice and CW. A total of 107 contacts were logged.

Leading the contact race among EGARA members was husband and wife team Justin and Yasmin Cummins, KG2RG / KC2ETX, with a total of 521. Justin, a former member of the club, decided to rejoin after being invited by EGARA President Bryan Jackson, W2RBJ, to help operate the Special Event station. The Cummings also won a \$50 gift certificate to KJI Electronics for being the EGARA members with the most contacts. Meanwhile, the operator with the most total contacts was SMARA member JR Hotaling, N2PEQ, who logged a total of 534 using his home station.



The Cummings teamed up to log a third of the total contacts made by W7Y

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On Sunday -- the actual day of the WGY Centennial -- EGARA members operated from their home stations, along with some SMARA members who also joined in using their home rigs. Club member Dave Smith, WA2WAP, lead the EGARA operators with 251 contacts, with the majority using digital modes on 80, 20, 15 and 10 meters. He also logged eight contacts on 2 meters. Dave worked a total of 39 states and 24 countries, including Ukraine, where Amateur operations have since been shut down because of the Russian invasion of the nation (see related story on page 7).

Two other EGARA members, Russ Greenman, WB2LXC and Andy Sullivan, KC2WWJ, teamed up to operate Sunday on 40 meters. Together they scored 101 contacts across the U.S. and Canada working 40 meters.

Other club members operating W7Y were Bryan Jackson, W2RBJ, Don Mayotte, KB2CDX, and Steve VanSickle, WB2HPR, who made a number of contacts using his new AM station. Several stations that he contacted remarked that it was fitting to use AM to honor WGY, an AM broadcast pioneer.

A complete summary of the W7Y contacts is on page two.

W7Y Contact Summary

Overview

- Total Contacts: 1,548
- Total Overseas DX Distance: 620,512
- Average Overseas DX distance: 3,293
 - Countries Worked: 41
 - U.S. States Worked: 43
- Bands Worked: 2, 10, 15, 20, 40, 80 Meters
- Modes Worked: AM, SSB, CW, Digital

Operator Contact Summary

- 534 - JR Hotaling - N2PEQ
- 521 - Justin & Yasmin Cummings, KG2RG / KC2ETX
 - 251 - Dave Smith - WA2WAP
 - 109 - Schenectady Museum ARA
- 101 - Russ Greenman & Andy Sullivan - WB2LXC / KC2WWJ
 - 17 - Bryan Jackson, W2RBJ
 - 14 - Steve VanSickle, WB2HPR
 - 1 - Don Mayotte, KB2CDX

Countries Worked

USA - Canada - Denmark - Netherlands -
European Russia - Scotland - Belgium - Azores
Finland - Puerto Rico - Italy - Spain - Czech
Republic - Federal Republic of Germany - France
- Hungary - Slovenia - Croatia - Poland Slovak
Republic - Norway - Aruba - Austria Barbados
- Belize - Bulgaria - Canary Islands - Cuba
- Curacao - South Korea - England - Jamaica -
Madeira Islands - Panama - Peru Portugal - St.
Vincent - Sweden - Ukraine - Honduras
US Virgin Islands

States Worked

NY - FL - PA - NC - OH - SC - CT - VA
IL - IN - MD - WI - GA - MA - MI - NJ
TN - ME - CA - KY - MO - OK - OR
MN - NH - NE - TX - AL - AR - DE - HI
IA - RI - VT - WA - WV - LA
KS - ND - SD - UT - WY

Hamfest 2022 Set for August 27th

EGARA's Annual Hamfest will return to the East Greenbush Town Park on August 27th, following last year's successful event at the venue. Once again, hours will run from 8 am to 1 pm, with admission remaining at \$6 per person and free parking. The event will include use of the Red Barn building and pavilion, with ample space for tailgaters as well.

"The town park location worked out really well last year and we heard lots of great feedback from hams that attended," said EGARA President Bryan Jackson, W2RBJ. "This year, we've also arranged to set up on Friday afternoon, meaning we should have ample time to prepare and ensure everything is ready to go Saturday morning."



Hamfest 2021 brought the biggest turnout ever

Last year, because the park was heavily booked with other events, EGARA could not access the park facility until early Saturday morning at 4 am. As a result, there was a rush to set up in time to open. Fortunately, club members turned out in force to get the job done.

As at last year's Hamfest, EGARA expects to have thousands of dollars in prizes for giveaways, including the traditional Grand Prize of an HF/6 meter transceiver. Other prizes are expected to be HT radios, shack accessories and gift certificates. Outreach to sponsors is already underway and at least once major vendor, KJI Electronics, plans to attend.



Tailgaters will once again have ample room at the town park to sell and swap gear

EGARA moved to the town park location last year after the East Greenbush Fire Department decided to no longer rent out its facility for events -- a policy it has kept in place for 2022.

"We considered scheduling our Hamfest for early June, but because the fire department facility is no longer available for events, many wedding receptions, bridal showers and graduation parties have taken up the weekends in June and July," Jackson said. "The August date was the only full weekend open, so we booked it. Luckily, even if the weather is hot, the Red Barn building at the park is fully air conditioned."

EGARA's 2021 Hamfest was its largest ever and the club looks forward to building on that success this year.

Support EGARA with Your 2022 Dues

It's time again to renew your annual membership -- unless you took advantage of an EGARA multi-year discount or have already paid for this year. Remember too, it's easy to pay dues on-line, using the club's fast and secure PayPal account, or you may mail a check. Information on dues options and the PayPal link are at:

<https://www.egara.club/pay-dues>

Thanks to income from our Hamfest, dues remain the same for 2022.

The History of Ham Radio: Scooped

Chris Codella, W2PA, author, John Pelham, W1JA, editor, Phil Johnson, W2SQ, editor

(Editor's note: By special arrangement with the authors, Sidebands is pleased to present this multi-part series on the history of ham radio. Subsequent chapters will be published in future monthly editions of the newsletter)

On the evening of 27 November 1923, a mother in Connecticut sent Thanksgiving greetings to her son who was a great distance away, via radio. She paid nothing for this service since her message was handled entirely by amateur radio operators. Impressively, it arrived only six minutes after she dictated it to a local ham on the telephone, traveling more than 6,000 miles to reach its addressee. Since her son happened to be aboard a ship that was frozen motionless in ice 700 miles from the North Pole, amateur radio was really the only way to convey such a greeting. Her message had traveled from Bristol, Connecticut via Catalina Island, California, to Etah, Greenland where the MacMillan expedition received it via its amateur station, WNP.

Don Mix's mom had participated in setting a new relay record, albeit one that lasted for only a day. The following night, the same group was at it again. 1XAQ in Bristol sent a message to WNP via 6XAD on Catalina (a specially licensed 100-meter station owned by Lawrence Mott, 6ZW) and received an acknowledgment five minutes and six seconds after starting the message. This was now the longest three-station round-trip relay—12,300 miles—and the fastest, traveling at 2,412 miles per minute. (QST mistakenly printed it as miles per hour in the summary box—though fast for transportation, that would be quite slow for radio.) This three-station relay circuit operated fairly reliably for more than a week.

The morning before Mrs. Mix's Thanksgiving message, another milestone was reached. Deloy at French 8AB sent a message addressed to WNP to 1XAM (John Reinarz's experimental station) who telephoned it to 1HX who then passed it to 6XAD as before. But since WNP was not on the air at the time, 6XAD passed it along to Barnsley at Canadian 9BP who got it to WNP the following night. Though not a speed or distance record, it was the first four-country relay.

In December, a group operating PA9, the first amateur transmitter in the Netherlands, specially licensed for the fourth transatlantic tests of late 1923, was soliciting 100-meter tests with American amateurs. Those in Belgium and Italy awaited authorization and expected it soon as well. "It seems assured that this is but the forerunner of regular transatlantic operation," predicted ARRL secretary Kenneth Warner accurately. "Oh! for the pen of a Wells, to picture the possibilities opened to amateur radio on both sides of the Atlantic, now that we are QSO!" he added, referring to science fiction writer H. G. Wells.

That the Deloy-Schnell QSO was no fluke was quickly becoming clear to everyone. Just a few weeks after the breathless reporting of that first transatlantic amateur contact, several others made it seem routine. Four British stations, another French station and one in the Netherlands all worked the US, with at least nine US stations making contact. And the Europeans were heard by many more amateurs in the US this time, as far west as the Pacific coast. Amateurs at last began to turn their attention away from 200 meters and down to shorter wavelengths. Warner observed that "Old-time amateurs who thought they had exhausted every thrill of the game are returning now, to tackle Europe."



G2KF, ca. 1924

The first US-UK QSO was made by Warner himself, operating at Schnell's station, 1MO (now referred to as u1MO using the new, unofficial intermediate 'u' as a prefix). He worked London amateur J. A. Partridge, G2KF, aided by Deloy at f8AB in the early morning hours of 8 December well past sunrise in London, which made it an astonishing feat. "A surprising feature of the communication was that as dawn wore on, on the other side, signals at 1MO became somewhat better," he wrote. Several other UK-US QSOs followed on subsequent nights.

The second station in France to make contact across the ocean was f8BF, with u1MO on 16 December, again with the aid of Deloy at f8AB. The first QSO with Holland followed next with u2AGB working Dutch station PCII on 27 December, receiving a message for ARRL. u2AGB now held the record for most stations worked in Europe, with six QSOs in three countries. Deloy was copied as far as the Pacific Northwest. In fact, f8AB was the most often copied European station, often readable twenty-five feet from the loudspeaker. (continued on page 5)

History of Ham Radio...

Now in regular contact, u1MO and f8AB lost track of the number of QSOs they'd completed and had passed more than 50 messages. All of the new QSOs were made in a range between 108 and 118 meters wavelength. "Probably we went thru so many years of vain struggling for contact with Europe simply waiting for a Deloy and a Schnell to try it on the shorter waves," remarked Warner with unnecessary equivocation.



Cartoon of Fred Schnell, 1MO, from January 1924 QST

He did not quite understand why using shorter wavelengths mattered, pondering, "Radiation at the higher frequency is somewhat better, it is true, but not enough of itself to account for the difference; QRM is less, it is true, but that can't account for it." He chose at this point to agree with the theory that simply using an aerial cut to a length much longer than its fundamental wavelength resulted in this benefit. "If we built special small aerials for 100 meters we would be no better off than in past years on 200 meters," he wrote. The steadiness of the short wave signals was also quite surprising, but apparently not yet convincing enough.

Expert opinions abounded in an effort to explain the successes at 100 meters. QST Technical Editor Robert S. Kruse took them on in rapid succession. First, it was not because of lower QRM. He pointed out that there was plenty of 100-meter QRM in the Hartford area from KDKA's shortwave broadcasts, and from harmonics of very many lower frequency stations, including u6PL, who was completely inaudible in Connecticut on his primary wavelength! Other broadcast harmonics were troublesome too, including WOR in New York, which was a nuisance because of its "wavering nature," as were the signals of various commercial spark stations.

He also attributed success to using aerials that were much longer than their natural wavelength, which usually involved tuning them with series capacitors. Kruse debunked ideas that such capacitors caused loss, saying they do not get hot so they could not be lossy, and yes, the resistance increases, but it's radiation resistance—something good! That was lesson one. Lesson two was to get down below 200 meters. Even without an X (experimental) license, hams could operate at 150. The third was to make a wave meter so you can know where you're operating. That was how Schnell and Deloy had done it, he asserted.

Among the messages Warner and Deloy handled was this one from Maxim sent to Marconi on 11 December 1923:

**HARTFORD DEC 11
MARCONI LONDON,**

**AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE PRESENTS ITS RESPECTS AND THIS EVIDENCE OF DAWN OF
INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR RADIO.**

HIRAM PERCY MAXIM

Marconi's reply came back via commercial wireless:

**LONDON DEC 17
MAXIM
RELAY LEAGUE
HARTFORD CONN.**

**PLEASE ACCEPT MY THANKS AND APPRECIATION WHICH I OFFER YOU AND ALL CONCERNED FOR YOUR
CORDIAL MESSAGE TRANSMITTED AND RECEIVED BY AMATEUR STATIONS.**

MARCONI.

Another pair was exchanged between Maxim and Eccles, g2GF, President of RSGB a few days later.

EGARA February Meeting Minutes

- The February 9, 2022 meeting of the EGARA was called to order at 7:08 PM by President Bryan Jackson, W2RBJ. A total of 17 members attended at the Masonic Temple. A round-robin introduction was held, followed by a raffle, with several members winning various prizes.
- Since the Temple basement renovation began, the club equipment has been unavailable, so no refreshments were available.
- Minutes of previous meetings can be found on the www.EGARA.club website, as a part of the archived Sidebands newsletters. Items for sale, or trade, or wanted to buy can be listed in the monthly newsletter. Members may contact Bryan Jackson, W2RBJ, email at W2RBJ@outlook.com to list these items.
- The Treasurers report was not available due to the absence of Don Mayotte, KB2CDX, EGARA Treasurer. Future expenditures include liability policy premiums.
- Upcoming events include annual elections, and interested members may self-nominate for positions on the board. All officer positions are open, and one Board of Director slot will be filled.
- Dues for 2022 may be paid at any monthly meeting, or via paypal through the club website, EGARA Club. ARRL annual dues may also be paid through the club – see Bryan Jackson, W2RBJ for instructions.
- A Special Event Station was scheduled for February 19 and 20 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the operation of AM broadcast station WGY. Members of SMARA will be operating from the Schenectady Museum station on the 19th, and EGARA members may operate from home on the 20th. An email will be sent to coordinate operations, and logging will be done with N3FJP software. Additionally, publicity will be through an interview over WGY with club president Bryan Jackson, W2RBJ.
- Bryan Jackson is working to secure a date for the 2022 EGARA hamfest (see story on page 3 for update).
- A club VE session is being planned. Several have completed Fred Carroll's Tech Course on-line. Also, VE sessions are available at the SARA monthly meetings (see story on page 9).
- Dave Smith, WA2WAP, gave a live demonstration of FT-8 digital communication modes using a portable HF transceiver with a PC. Dave described the necessary hardware and software used to make FT-8 and FT-4 contacts. During the demo, 10 contacts were successfully completed.
- Dave also distributed checklists and program CD's to those interested in trying these digital modes. He recommended the ARRL book *Get On the Air: HF Digital* as a reference source.
- The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 PM.
- Submitted by Steve VanSickle, WB2HPR - Secretary

On the Beam News & Notes

Amateur Radio in Ukraine Ordered Off the Air in State of Emergency

A state of emergency was declared in Ukraine just prior to the Russian military invasion. Among other things, the February 24th decree from President Volodymyr Zelensky will remain in effect at least for 30 days and may be extended.

As published on the website of the Verkhovna Rada, Ukraine's unicameral legislative body, the state of emergency includes regulation of TV and radio activities and "a ban on the operation amateur radio transmitters for personal and collective use."

The decree also imposes a ban on mass events and on strikes and authorizes checking the documents of citizens, and if necessary, conducting searches on persons, vehicles, cargo, office space, and housing. A curfew could be imposed.

"The situation changes rapidly," IARU Region 1 Secretary Mats Espling, SM6EAN, said. "IARU Region 1 continues to monitor the development and expect all radio amateurs to follow their national laws and regulations."

In Case You Forgot

FCC: Amateur Service Licensees May Not Use Their Radios to Commit Criminal Acts



The FCC Enforcement Bureau has re-issued its earlier Enforcement Advisory that licensees in the Amateur Radio Service and licensees and operators in the Personal Radio Services are prohibited from using radios in those services to commit or facilitate criminal acts. The Commission did not explain why it had reissued the warning.

"The Bureau recognizes that these services can be used for a wide range of permitted and socially beneficial purposes, including emergency communications and speech that is protected under the First Amendment of the US Constitution," the FCC said. "Amateur and Personal Radio Services, however, may not be used to commit or facilitate crimes."

As it did in advisories in 2021, the Enforcement Bureau is reminding amateur licensees that they may not transmit, "communications intended to facilitate a criminal act" or "messages encoded for the purpose of obscuring their meaning."

"Likewise, individuals operating radios in the Personal Radio Services, a category that includes Citizens Band radios, Family Radio Service walkie-talkies, and General Mobile Radio Service, are prohibited from using those radios "in connection with any activity which is against Federal, State, or local law.

"Individuals using radios in the Amateur or Personal Radio Services in this manner may be subject to severe penalties, including significant fines, seizure of the offending equipment, and, in some cases, criminal prosecution.

"To report a crime, contact your local law enforcement office or the FBI, the FCC said."

History of Ham Radio...

After a year's worth of records and new international contacts, the January 1924 QST cover drawing by Clyde Darr, 8ZZ, depicted a vision of the near future: 1930 (no help needed from Mr. Wells). A US ham holding a fist full of QSL cards, and many more hanging on the wall from various countries, locates a new contact on a globe into which he's sticking map pins. There are many already present on what appears to be the European continent.

Although Darr saw his vision become reality much sooner than he had forecast, he became a silent key one month short of that new decade's arrival after having drawn sixty-nine QST covers. (In the last month of his life he received hundreds of messages in a "message party" held in his honor.)

As the weather turned cool, "Hot news is breaking every day, amateur records are being smashed to smithereens every time we turn around, and it's a wild job to keep up with progress and get the stuff chronicled in the mag.," wrote Warner. November alone brought several achievements: the first two-way transatlantic amateur contact, which also was the first 100-meter transatlantic contact by any radio service, the record on 100 meters; a new all time distance record when WNP worked u6CEU in Hawaii, who was using three 5-watt tubes in his transmitter; new relaying records in time and distance; the first contacts between Alaskan stations and the continental US; and two Australian stations were heard in California.

The fourth transatlantic tests had not yet officially reached their 11 January date for two-way contacts on 200 meters. As Warner noted, "the short waves have scooped the tests," but he still expected many more on 200 meters once they began.

The tests ran as scheduled, despite being "scooped," and the winners were announced in March 1924. The top prize went to R. B. Bourne, u1ANA, Chatham, Massachusetts, known previously for his early work with WNP, for the greatest number of station-miles, 390,460, having logged twelve British stations, nine French and one Dutch. In all, 20 British, 14 French, and 3 Dutch stations were copied. The UK's W. W. Burnham now owed Kenneth Warner the clock they had wagered. (It's unclear what happened to the green suspenders idea.)

About 1,200 interfering American stations were copied during the test and reported to the Traffic Manager, officially disqualifying them from winning prizes.

Comparatively unnoticed, the Transpacific tests ran in late October, during which 150 to 200 American and Canadian amateurs were received in Australia. Poor conditions prevailed with strong strays and harmonic interference. 6KA was the strongest station making it through from the US.

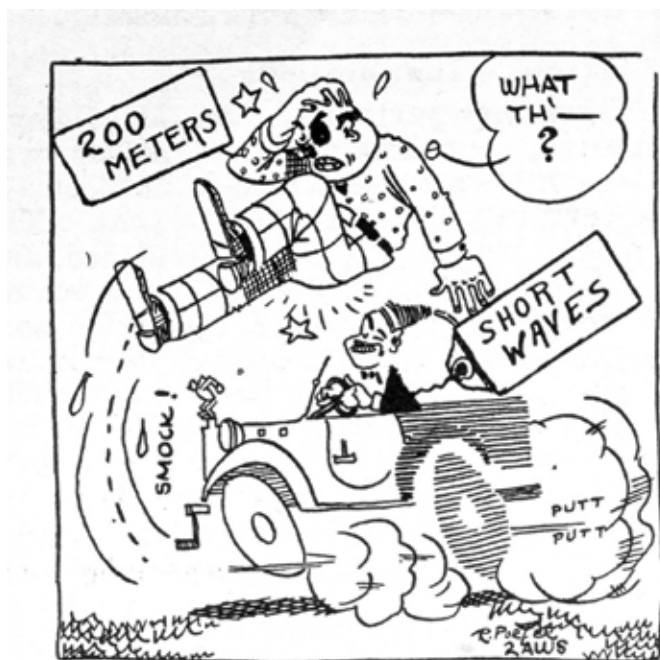
Perhaps it was because the work with WNP was primarily focused on receiving messages from the MacMillan expedition as opposed to transmitting to them. Or maybe it was that no one yet fully understood the advantages of shorter wavelengths. It's also possible that the pervasive belief that longer aeralis were required made hams discount the relevance of the recent tests because they knew WNP had limited space. Whatever the reason was, no one told Don Mix about the recent accomplishments on shortwaves.



(continued on page 9)

History of Ham Radio...

As spring of 1924 approached and the Bowdoin crew began to see some daylight around noon, signal strength had fallen off even more rapidly. The window of opportunity for hams in North America to work or even hear the expedition would now grow increasingly narrow as the expedition anticipated their return voyage. WNP was in two-way contact with home only sporadically through February and March, without having a single contact with 9BP, previously their most reliable link. Just enough communication got through to home in early April to convey that all was well with the expedition. The Bowdoin was now in constant daylight.



QST cartoon from January 1924

As conditions continued to worsen no further contacts were made and even the signals from the powerful commercial stations were difficult to copy at WNP. Facing terrible radio conditions and with the fuel supply dwindling, Mix recommended to MacMillan that he suspend the regular radio watch and from that point operated much less frequently until they began the return trip in August.

Frustratingly, the recent achievements on the short waves were still completely unknown to Mix. Though it now seemed like a logical suggestion, no one had gotten through to ask him to move to shorter wavelengths, specifically 100 meters, where it might have been easier to make contact even during the nearly twenty-four-hour daylight.

As expected, the ice began to break up in June forcing them to abandon the longer aerials strung between the ship and the ice. The expedition left for home on 1 August. As they navigated south along the Greenland coast, conditions began to improve and on 26 August they made contact with u9CDV in East Grand Forks, Minnesota. Communication was mostly continuous from this point on, making contact with amateurs all along the way home, including Milton Mix, Don's brother, operating from u1TS, Don's home station.

On 20 September 1924 they arrived back at Wiscasset, Maine, having traveled more than 2,000 miles and spent 320 days frozen in the arctic winter ice. The crew was welcomed home by a gathering of several thousand people filling the small town on the village green. Maxim was one of the speakers in a ceremony at the Congregational Church.

Though never tuned to higher frequencies, WNP's Zenith radio equipment had performed beyond expectations. Not a single tube or battery had needed replacement during the entire fifteen-month expedition.

After returning, Mix reported that while he had copied "scraps here and there" about the activity on shorter wavelengths, he "had no idea that they had been so successful." He concluded that if he had been able to get down to 100 meters or so, the communications would have been much more reliable even during daylight.

VE Test Session Set for March 5th

EGARA will sponsor an exam session for all classes of Amateur Radio licenses on March 5th beginning at 10 am. The exam will be held at the East Greenbush Masonic Lodge located at 710 Columbia Turnpike. Applicants are urged to register for the test session by contacting W2RBJ@outlook.com and should indicate which test(s) they plan to take. Walk-ins will also be accepted. Every applicant must have a FRN number issued to them by the FCC before they can take their exam. The testing fee is \$15. The FCC has been authorized to collect licensing fees from Amateur Radio licensees, but has not yet implemented their collection.

Complete details on what is required to take the Amateur Radio exams can be found at WWW.EGARA.CLUB.

Securing PowerPole Connectors

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

In preparation for Field Day, I made a bunch of cables with PowerPole connectors to connect the solar panel, charge controller and batteries that I used. If you're not familiar with PowerPoles, you might want to check out this YouTube video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o31iuOcQ-jo>). They're really great connectors, and have become the DC connector of choice for many hams.



When I make up PowerPole cables, I normally don't bother trying to secure the two halves together, especially if you're using some decently heavy gauge wire. They fit together pretty tightly, and don't come apart easily. Even so, I think securing them together is a good idea. You can buy a little roll pin to insert between the red and black housings that is supposed to prevent them from coming apart, but many folks complain that the pin has a tendency to fall out. This not only defeats the purpose, but could also damage your equipment.

Securing them is the right thing to do, though, and I recently came across some great suggestions on how to do this in the daily digest that I receive from the Elecraft-KX mailing list (<https://groups.io/g/Elecraft-KX>). Here are the best tips from the thread, Securing Anderson Power Poles (<https://groups.io/g/Elecraft-KX/topic/75060413>):

- Rudy K8SWD: You can thermally bond the red and black housings with a soldering iron like you are making little welds on both sides. Permanent (mostly) but it works better than the roll pins. Just clean the tip really good before soldering!
- Dave K0CDA: [Anderson] also make connectors that are thermally bonded together in pairs. They do NOT come apart.
- Don W3FPR: I use a drop of Super Glue on the junction of the plastic pieces. Warning – that glue grabs quickly, so slide the 2 pieces only enough to start the assembly, then apply the drop of glue and quickly finish sliding them together. I have never had ones prepared like that come apart, and I don't use roll pins. I will say one more thing – use only the genuine APPs. I have seen some knockoffs that do not mate well.
- Greg KC9NRO: Take a hot soldering iron. Wipe the tip with sponge. Run the tip down both side of APP bonding the black and red sides together. Clean soldering iron tip and apply some solder to tip. That's how I roll. Never comes apart
- Mike AI4NS: PVC cement will soften the plastic enough to bond them together. You can also get plastic welding rods, such as Daindy Plastic Welding Rods (https://www.amazon.com/dp/B086HNQXM3/ref=cm_sw_r_cp_api_i_poR8Eb88N54P4). Chuck a rod in a Dremel and weld them together. I have made plastic boxes and panels using this method.
- Jack WD4E: Snip the cotton end off a Q-tip, cutting at an angle. Insert into hole made for roll pin, cut off excess, save remainder of Q-tip for next requirement.
- Troy K4JDA: 2.5mm screws work well, stay in, and are easily removable.

I posted these suggestions to my blog (<https://KB6NU.com>) and got a few more great suggestions:

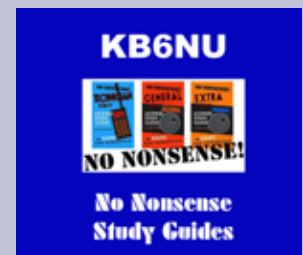
- Tom KB8UUZ: Fat tooth picks also work great. Jam it in, break it off.
- Bruce N0NHP: I use MEK (Methyl Ethyl Ketone) replacement to clean my circuit boards after soldering. A single drop of MEK on the junction between the two halves of the PowerPole shell will fuse them. It can be broken with a sharp tap but not accidentally. It will set and dry in seconds and should be applied after the shell pieces are put together.

I think these are all great suggestions. I think that I'm going to try the cotton swab method. While reading them, another thought occurred to me. I haven't tried this yet, but I'm thinking a little drop of hot glue on the roll-pin hole might work, too.

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Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, is the author of the KB6NU amateur radio blog (KB6NU.Com), the "No Nonsense" amateur radio license study guides (KB6NU.Com/study-guides/), and often appears on the ICQPodcast (icqpodcast.com).

Get the Gear You Need from Our Hamfest Sponsors



Spring is Just Around the Corner... and so is EGARA's Annual Election!

By Steve VanSickle, WB2HPR

Another year has flown by – and soon we'll be enjoying milder weather (I hope!), with a chance to check the largest part of our station's (the antenna system) – and to see what repairs are needed or improvements that can be made. Hopefully, everything checks out OK.

But there's another rite of Spring you also should be involved in. We'll all have a chance to participate in our club's annual election of officers and board of directors at the April EGARA meeting.



If your dues are paid by April 1st, you're eligible to participate as a candidate (and vote) – whether you want to run for a leadership position, or serve on the board. All members have a “say” by casting their votes for those who are nominated. The nominees may be the existing slate of candidates, or you can choose those who may wish to take one of the director or leader positions. Remember, EGARA is *your* club, and I hope that every member will attend to make their voice heard.

One position will be changing this year – that of club secretary. I will not be seeking another term this time around. I have always felt that a new set of eyes and ears can always bring about a new perspective on just how to do this job. Don't get me wrong – I have enjoyed the opportunity to act as club secretary – and have tried to create a concise written record of the monthly meetings in an objective manner, without personal bias. I have really enjoyed the chance to serve, and have learned a lot in doing so. I thank all the membership for their help in making the secretary position a fun experience for me. But – as I said – it's time for change, and time for me to pass the note pad and pen to my successor. Good change is “good”.

So – please try your best to attend the club meetings. Besides the annual election, our presenters make a super effort to bring timely and informative programs to you at the meetings. They deserve your support and welcome your questions, ideas, and suggestions. I know that I always learn something new, and pick up a tip or two from our fellow members. You can, too!

Pretty soon, all this frozen weather will be but a memory, we'll turn another calendar page, and begin a new season of Hamfests, Parks On The Air, Field Day, and other fun events. (Example – we are looking to sponsor a group visit to ARRL Headquarters, for one!)

So – mark your calendar -- and get involved! I hope to see everyone at the April meeting!

Ham Humor



Pay Your 2022 EGARA Dues The Quick and Easy Way!

www.egara.club/pay-dues

CALENDAR

March 5, 2022 - 10 am - EGARA FCC exam session, East Greenbush Masonic Lodge. All classes of exams given.

March 9, 2022 - 7 pm - Regular monthly club meeting. Masonic Lodge, 710 Columbia Turnpike, East Greenbush, NY.

August 27, 2022 - Hamfest 2020, East Greenbush Town Park

Pro Tip: Optimize Your Signal

Make sure you are using your microphone, keyer, and sound card properly!

Get together with a friend and configure your audio so that it's clear, clean, and "sounds like you." Note how the ALC and power output meters act when you have things set properly.



For FM voice, find out what microphone orientation and voice level sound best. Have your friend listen to adjacent channels and frequencies — splattering or over-deviation waste power and aggravate others.

On the digital modes, check your audio settings, both receive and transmit. On receive, your audio level should be well above the minimum noise level but not so high that a strong signal exceeds the maximum input range of decoder.

On transmit, have that helpful friend be sure you don't overdrive the audio circuits and create spurious signals.

When using an SSB transceiver for digital modes like PSK, RTTY, or one of the WSJT family, the ALC system, including speech processing, should be off. If you can't turn ALC completely off, set your audio level so that the ALC meter shows no activity during transmissions.

ALC changes the signal level, distorting the modulation and making it harder to decode.



For Sale...

- **Heathkit DX 35** with VFO and PTT, \$150
 - **Heathkit DX 60** with VFO and PTT, \$150
 - **Kenwood 520** Transceiver \$225.00
- Contact Tom at kc2fcp@nycap.rr.com

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- **VIBROPLEX "Bug" semi-automatic key.** Original "PRESENTATION" Model with Gold Plated baseplate escutcheon. Beautiful heavily chromed upper parts, bright red finger pieces, jeweled bearings. Lists for \$350 but you can own this beauty for only \$250 plus postage. In absolutely beautiful condition, this dazzling example of Vibroplex engineering will be supplied in a unique hard-shell protective carrying case.

Contact Steve at: (518) 326-0902 or stevewb2hpr@gmail.com

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- **Connect Systems CS 800d** 2m /440 analog/digital DMR mobile asking \$150.00
 - **BCA-300** dual band 2m/440 mag mount antenna sam define connector asking \$20.00
 - **HYS dual band antenna** 2m/440 nmo mag mount 20' tall asking \$20.00

Contact Walt at: n2wjr07@gmail.com

Got Gear to Sell, Want to Buy or Swap?

Don't forget you can run a classified ad in Sidebands completely FREE!

Send a brief description and your asking price to:
W2RBJ@outlook.com

The East Greenbush Amateur Radio Association

Organized in 1998, by Bert Bruins, N2FPJ, (SK) and Chris Linck, N2NEH, the East Greenbush Amateur Radio Association, an ARRL affiliate, is committed to providing emergency services, educational programs, and operating resources to amateur radio operators and residents of the Capital Region of New York State. The club station is W2EGB. The club also has several VHF and UHF repeaters open to club members and the public.